

Acknowledgments

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The 381 participating New Jersey police agencies

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Executive Summary

Use of a seat belt is generally considered to be the most effective means of reducing fatalities and serious injuries in traffic crashes. The U.S. Congress created the Section 157 Innovative Grant Program in an effort to raise seat belt usage rates throughout the country. In FY2004 the New Jersey Division of Highway Traffic Safety utilized a large portion of its Section 157 Innovative Grant funding to carry out a comprehensive seat belt program called the Click It or Ticket 2004 Seat Belt Mobilization. The mobilization ran from May 24 through June 6, 2004.

Key components of the Click It or Ticket 2004 Seat Belt Mobilization included targeted seat belt enforcement by 381 police agencies in the state, 222 of which received Click It or Ticket grants from the Division through the Section 157 funding. New Jersey also received an additional \$500,000 for a paid media campaign to support the mobilization. New Jersey used its \$500,000 to produce radio spots, which aired on stations in New Jersey, New York City and Philadelphia. Other components of the paid media campaign included transit bus signs and movie theater advertising.

Two kickoff events were held to launch the 2004 Click It or Ticket campaign. The program was announced at the statewide “101 Safe Driving Days of Summer” event on May 20, 2004 on the Boardwalk in Seaside Heights. The enforcement phase of the program began with an operation near the George Washington Bridge in Fort Lee on the morning of May 24, 2004, conducted by the Bergen County Police Department.

Both of these media events generated coverage of the Click It or Ticket campaign on radio, television, and newspapers.

The following are highlights of Click It or Ticket 2004 mobilization effort:

- Letters of invitation were sent to all 482 police agencies in the state.
- Staff from the Division called each police agency to confirm receipt of the correspondence and to elicit participation in the mobilization.
- A total of **381** police departments participated in the two-week enforcement mobilization, the largest number ever.
- 222 municipal police departments received Click It or Ticket grants and participated in the two-week mobilization.
- More than **69,000** seat belt summonses were issued statewide during the two-week campaign.
- 30 police agencies issued more than 400 summonses during the two-week campaign.
- A post-mobilization seat belt survey was conducted following the campaign. Results of the survey indicate that the seat belt usage rate in New Jersey rose for the 8th consecutive year, to an all-time high of 82%.
- Comparisons of pre and post-surveys conducted by Click It or Ticket grant-funded agencies shows that seat belt usage rose in 90% (181 of 201) of the grant-funded municipalities.
- 2,043 sixty-second radio spots in support of the campaign were aired on 67 radio stations in the New Jersey, Philadelphia and New York City radio markets.

- The following counties achieved 100% participation in the mobilization: Bergen (70 of 70 police agencies reporting), Passaic (17 of 17 police agencies reporting), and Sussex (13 of 13 police agencies reporting).
- More than 100 participating police agencies attended a Post-Click It or Ticket Mobilization Breakfast event held on June 16, 2004 at the New Jersey State Police Technology Center in Hamilton Township.

In conclusion, the Click It or Ticket 2004 Mobilization provided the Division the opportunity to partner with an unprecedented number of police agencies, engage the public through a comprehensive paid and earned media advertising campaign, and track and accurately tabulate the results of the program. Most importantly, survey results show that seat belt utilization rose as result of this program.

I. Background

On June 9, 1998, Congress enacted the Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century (TEA-21). Section 1403 of this act contained a new incentive grant program to enhance the use of seat belts. Under this program, funds were allocated for each fiscal year from 1998 until 2003 to states that either exceed the national average seat belt usage rate or that improve their state seat belt usage rate, based on certain required determinations and findings. The program was approved for continuation by Congress for FY2004.

The objective of the Section 157 Grant program is to increase seat belt usage by supporting the implementation of innovative projects that build upon strategies known to be effective in increasing seat belt use rates.

The New Jersey Division of Highway Traffic Safety has received Section 157 grant awards each fiscal year since 2000 to conduct a statewide program of highly visible enforcement and publicity programs to increase seat belt use. The funds received under the grant program have been used to involve the participation of state and local police agencies in intensified enforcement campaigns designed to provide support during nationwide seat belt mobilizations. A media initiative to support the enforcement component provided funds for radio announcements and other paid media as part of a statewide publicity campaign.

II. Methodology

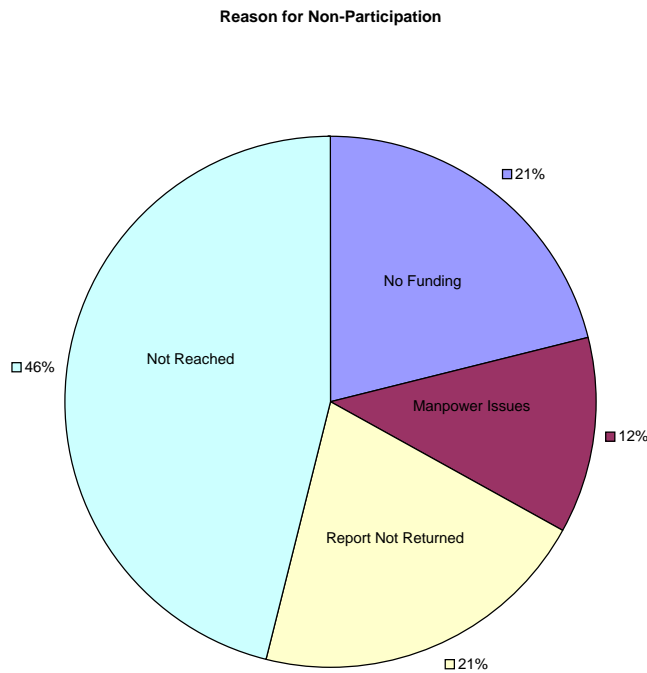
The Division of Highway Traffic Safety requested and was granted funding from the Section 157 Innovative Grant program for 2004. This grant, also known as Click It or Ticket, funded the major seat belt enforcement mobilization that took place from May 24 through June 6, 2004.

Planning for the Click It or Ticket 2004 Mobilization began in January, 2004, and followed a program and timeline developed by staff members of the Division. During March and April, 2004 the Division sent letters of invitation to all 482 police departments in New Jersey inviting them to participate in the 2004 Click It or Ticket Mobilization. Based on available funding levels, approximately 200 departments were offered Click It or Ticket grants to support efforts locally. Along with the letters of invitation and grant materials, each department received a mobilization enforcement reporting form to be filled out and returned prior to June 18, 2004.

For the follow-up calls, a form was developed on which staff members recorded which departments received the invitation, which did not, which departments were willing to participate in the mobilization, and which departments could not be reached. For many departments, several phone calls were made to ensure that we communicated our desire for them to participate in the campaign. Prior to the mobilization approximately 340 police agencies indicated that they would participate. The final level of participation turned out to be greater, with 381 departments ultimately submitting reporting forms.

A list of the 102 agencies that did not to participate in the campaign is included in Appendix C.

The graph below depicts the reasons for the lack of participation.



Of the 102 agencies that did not participate, 12-percent mentioned a lack of available personnel as the reason while 21-percent mentioned the lack of grant funding. Another 21-percent initially indicated that they would participate, but did not return a reporting form. The remaining 46-percent could not be reached despite repeated attempts.

Participation by Region:

Region 1 South:	97 participants	36 non-participants	73%
Region 2 Central	110 participants	52 non-participants	68%
Region 3 North	173 participants	14 non-participants	92%

As the result of this concerted effort to elicit participation from the local departments, the response to the mobilization effort was greater than ever before. A total of 381 police departments participated. This represents 79 percent of the total local police agencies in the state.

222 municipal police agencies received grant funding for the Click It or Ticket 2004 mobilization. The grant paid for 100 hours of overtime patrols during the two-week period of May 24 through June 6. Officers on these overtime patrols were charged with enforcing existing motor vehicle codes, with particular emphasis on the occupant protection statutes relating to seat belts and child safety seats.

Two sets of observational surveys on seat belt usage by motor vehicle drivers and occupants were done to capture the effect of the mobilization. One was done statewide by DHTS and the

other was done by the 222 Click It or Ticket grantees. Each set of surveys was conducted before and after the mobilization.

The pre and post-mobilization statewide observational surveys were conducted by Division staff members from May 10 to May 21, 2004 and from June 7 to June 18, 2004. The location of the surveys consisted of a random sampling of the survey locations used in the Division's annual seat belt survey. The counties selected for the surveys were divided into highly urban or less urban, according to population. The aforementioned methodology of site selection tries to adjust to the changes in the number of sites and traffic patterns. The statewide DHTS survey involved the following seven counties: Atlantic, Bergen, Burlington, Mercer, Middlesex, Ocean, and Union.

III. Analysis of the Data

The success of any effort to increase seat belt use depends greatly on highly visible enforcement of the state's Primary Seat Belt Law. These enforcement efforts include the issuance of citations to motorists that do not wear a seat belt and to drivers who do not properly restrain their children. Results from statewide observational survey conducted immediately after the mobilization show a usage rate in New Jersey of 82%, an increase of .08 percentage points from 2003, and the 8th consecutive annual increase in the rate.

The table that follows summarizes the results of the enforcement component of the campaign.

During the two-week Click It or Ticket 2004 Mobilization, the 381 participating police

departments issued **64,498** seat belt citations, **1,142** child restraint citations, and **29,209** other citations.

Table 1. ***Results of the Mobilization 2004***

	Seat Belt Citations	Child Restraint Citations	Other Citations
380 Local Police	67,567	1,132	28,524
NJ State Police	1,931	10	685
Total	69,498	1,142	29,209

The statewide seat belt usage rate increased by nearly seven percentage points from 75.2 percent pre-mobilization to 82-percent post-mobilization. For the pre-mobilization survey, Division staffers went to 195 sites and made a total of 52,681 observations. For the post-mobilization survey, 198 sites were visited and 55,817 observations were made.

The following table presents the results of the pre and post-mobilization surveys. A higher usage rate was noted in the post-mobilization survey in all seven counties. The counties with the largest increase in usage were Union and Mercer counties. They reported increases of 11.1 and 8.4 respectively.

Estimated Safety Belt Usage Rates

In New Jersey by County

Pre and Post Mobilization

County	Pre Mobilization	Post Mobilization
Atlantic	76.6	76.9
Bergen	76.1	83.4
Burlington	78.7	84.7
Mercer	72.3	80.7
Middlesex	75.3	79.1
Ocean	74.4	81.8
Union	74.7	85.8
Statewide Average	75.2	82.0

As part of its grant agreement with the Division, New Jersey State Police conducted seat belt pre and post-surveys at 39 locations within the jurisdictions of Troops A, B, and C. Of the 39 locations surveyed, 36 locations showed an increased rate of seat belt usage in the post-mobilization survey.

In addition, 201 sets of pre and post-surveys received from Click It or Ticket grant-funded agencies indicate a marked increase in seat belt usage in those municipalities. Of the 201 reports received, 181 (90%) showed increased seat belt usage in the post-mobilization survey, 13 showed a decrease and seven were unchanged.

IV. Conclusion

It is clear from the results of the Click It or Ticket 2004 Seat Belt Mobilization that the local law enforcement community in the state is willing to participate in important statewide traffic safety programs such as this. An unprecedented number of police agencies in the state embraced the 2004 Mobilization and through the dedicated work of these local officers a very strong message was sent about the importance of seat belt usage.

The large number of occupant protection-related summonses that were issued during the campaign and the resulting increase in the statewide seat belt usage rates proves once again that high visibility enforcement campaigns have a very positive effect on enhancing traffic safety.

The State of New Jersey has come a long way with regards to usage of seat belts. In fact, the state's seat belt usage rate has risen 22 percentage points in the last 8 years. It is anticipated that the partnership between the Division and the local law enforcement community that were developed during the Click It or Ticket 2004 Mobilization will continue to be broadened and strengthened in the years ahead, to further deliver the seat belt message and to further increase the usage rate in the state of New Jersey.